

DETAILED ACTION

1. This office action is in response to amendment filed on 12 April 2010. Claims 1 and 3 have been amended, Claims 18-22 have been newly introduced and no claim has been cancelled. Therefore, claims 1-7, 9-12, 5-17 and 18-22 are allowed in view of Examiner's Amendment presented below.

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

2. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with *Robert Cannuscio* on 15 July, 2010.

In the claims:

Claim 1. (Currently Amended) A water treatment apparatus programmable pass key and a water treatment apparatus ~~adapted to read~~ for reading the pass key when the pass key is in communication with the apparatus, the pass key being separable from the water treatment apparatus and ~~adapted to be~~ physically held and operable by a user during use, the water treatment apparatus being a stand- alone unit that ~~is adapted to~~ configured to receive and be activated by one or more external pass keys, the pass key comprising a data carrier programmed with one or more predetermined codes, each code relating to an operation in or of the water

treatment apparatus; the pass key being connectable to the water treatment apparatus from outside the unit without the removal of any components of the water treatment apparatus; wherein one of the codes is programmed to allow the user to service the water treatment apparatus after the pass key communicates with the water treatment apparatus and prevents servicing without the pass key first having been in communication with the water treatment apparatus.

Claim 21. (Currently Amended) A pass key and apparatus combination as claimed in claim 20 wherein the water treatment apparatus is ~~adapted to~~ configured to communicate with multiple pass keys, and wherein not all disabled functions can be enabled by the same pass key, the water treatment apparatus enabling only select disabled functions that are associated with a particular pass key that is first brought into communication with the water treatment apparatus.

Allowable Subject Matter

3. The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter: The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: the prior art of record fails to disclose or suggest a combination of A water treatment apparatus programmable pass key and a water treatment apparatus adapted to read the pass key when the pass key is in communication with the apparatus, the pass key being separable from the water treatment apparatus and adapted to be physically held and operable by a user during use, the water treatment apparatus being a stand- alone unit that is adapted to receive and be activated by one or more external pass keys, the pass key comprising a data carrier programmed with one or more predetermined codes, each

code relating to an operation in or of the water treatment apparatus; the pass key being connectable to the water treatment apparatus from outside the unit without the removal of any components of the water treatment apparatus; wherein one of the codes is programmed to allow the user to service the water treatment apparatus after the pass key communicates with the water treatment apparatus and prevents servicing without the pass key first having been in communication with the water treatment apparatus. This along with the rest of the claimed limitations is not shown by the prior art.

Citation of Other Prior Arts

4. The prior art made a record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Jornitz discloses in Device and method for monitoring the integrity of filtering installations (US 7048775), and Tanner discloses in Water treatment devices and cartridges therefor (US 7441664).

Conclusion

5. Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance." Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Fekadesclassie Girma whose telephone number is (571) 270-5886. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday thru Friday, 8:30-5:00. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Daniel J. Wu can

be reached on 571-272-2964. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300. Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free)? If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/FG/

/Daniel Wu/

Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 2612